(b) if so, what are the details of the discussions held with him regarding the disbursement of loans ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (b) Mr. Lewis T. Preston, President of the World Bank, visited India from November 10 to 15, 1992. During his visit, discussions were held with him on matters pertaining to the World Bank's portfolio of projects in India, and on the prospects of continued and increased support from the World Bank in view of the general appreciation of the progress achieved by India in restoring macro-economic stabilisation. Mr. Preston was advised regarding the steps taken recently to speed up the pace of disbursement of loans, including a decision to transfer 100% of external assistance to implementing State Governments, provision of advances, intensification of monitoring of projects, etc.

Suggestions made by Social Audit Panel on telecom & postal services

*118. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE :

SHRI P. UPENDRA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Social Audit Panel on telecom and postal services, appointed by his Ministry has suggested radical changes in the telecom billing practices in the country on a priority basis; and

(b) if so, what steps Governments are taking to implement the suggestions made by the panel ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) and (b) In its Second Action Report, submitted in October, 92 the Social Audit Panel has recommended some changes in billing practices. The recommendations are under the consideration of the department.

Introduction of radio telephone connections

*119. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received by Government to introduce radio telephone connections in India for the general public;

(b) whether Government have accepted the proposal on nation-wide basis; and

(c) what is the number of car telephones available in India on every city level and what are the new connections to be released during 1992-93 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) In response to tender invited by the Department of Telecommunications for franchising the operation of Cellular Mobile Telephone service in the four metro cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras, 30 bids were received. 14 bidders were short listed and financial tenders issued to them. After financial evaluation 8 bidders, 2 per city, were provisionally selected.

(b) The present proposal is not for nation-wide operation. It is to cover areas of the four Metro cities only.

(c) At present car telephone is operated only in MTNL, Delhi. Number of car telephones working is 261. No further connections are planned for release during 1992-93.

Plan for development of Air India, Indian Airlines and I.T.D.C.

*120. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI :

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) what are the plans of Government to develop Air India, Indian Airlines and India Tourism Development Corporation to generate more profits; and

(b) whether the plan includes expansion of their activities or off loading of their Stakes ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b) Fleet renewel plans for Air India and Indian Airlines have been approved to enable them have younger and modern fleet to improve their operational efficiency and customer appeal. It is also proposed to restructure Air India and Indian Airlines for which a Bill has been introduced in the Lok Sabha. The proposed restructuring is intended to facilitate expansion of their activities; no disinvestment of existing Government equity funds in these Corporation is envisaged.

The India Tourism Development Corporation, in its VIII Five Year Plan, has included joint sector projects, expansion of duty free shop business, consultancy and management services for tourism related projects.

Development of tourism for low income group tourists

1150. SHRI ASHIS SEN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any plan for development of tourism for low income group tourists in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b) Development of tourism is primarily the responsibility of State Governments. However, the Central Development of Tourism assists State Governments for setting up of infrastructural facilities, such as, Yatri Niwas, Yatrikas, Pilgrim sheds and tented accommodation, for low income and other categories of domestic tourists.

I.T.D.C. Offices in Foreign Countries

1151. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to review and upgrade Indian Tourism Offices in foreign countries as one of the major steps to promote and boost tourist traffic in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what are the details of fresh infrastructural facilities proposed to be provided; and

(d) what other new facilities and incentives are being offered to travel agents and foreign tourists for promotion of tourism?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b) Review of Tourist Offices abroad is a continuous process with a view to promoting tourist traffic to the country. Recently tourist office has been opened at Dubai is being upgraded while a new office is proposed to be opened at Seoul.

(c) 15 circuits and destinations have been identified in the National Action Plan for Tourism for intensive development of Tourist infrastructure.

(d) Among other measures, rules and procedures for recognition of travel agents and tour operators have been liberalised, Government have reduced the customs duty for import of cars and coaches for the travel industry and import duty on adventure sports equipment as well as golf equipments has been reduced.

वायु मार्ग से जोड़े गये महत्वपूर्ण तीर्थ स्थल

1152. **श्री विश्वास राव राजराव पाटिल:** क्या नागर विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार महत्वपूर्ण तीर्थ स्थलों को वायु मार्ग से जोड़ने का विचार रखती है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उन तीर्थ स्थलों का ब्योरा क्या है ;

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने महाराष्ट्र में शिर्डी में एक विमानपत्तन का निर्माण किए जाने के लिए भूमि उपलब्ध करायी है ;